



**Seattle**  
**Office of Emergency**  
**Management**

*DISASTER READY...  
PREPARED PEOPLE,  
RESILIENT COMMUNITIES*

September 22, 2016

Tom Wheeler, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
425 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

[Submitted via FCC Electronic Comments Filing System]

Re: NOTICE OF EX PARTE PS Docket 15-91 Improving Wireless Emergency Alerts and Community-Initiated Alerting

Dear Mr. Wheeler,

The City of Seattle supports proposed changes to the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) system to the following:

1. Enable alerting to smaller areas;
2. Allow longer messages;
3. Allow alerts to contain embedded pictures, phone numbers and clickable links;
4. Enable phones to show where the message recipient is in relation to a hazard area (i.e., device-assisted geotargeting);
5. Send messages in multiple languages; and
6. Allow for comments back from recipients (i.e., "Many-to-One" capability)

**Alerts to smaller areas:** Enabling more precise alerting is the single most important action the FCC can take to make WEA relevant for first responders in the City of Seattle. Currently, the smallest guaranteed delivery area is the county and consequently that is the smallest area to which an alert safely can be made. Seattle is 83 square miles while its surrounding county, King County, is 2,307 square miles. The City of Seattle doesn't use WEA because it doesn't want to issue alerts to the 96% of King County that is not the City of Seattle. The lack of precise targeting makes WEA useless for Seattle in all but the largest events.

**Allow longer messages:** Seattle supports the proposal to increase message length from 90 to 360 characters. As the recent New York City WEA alerts demonstrated, it is very difficult in 90 characters to provide accurate and precise information that recipients will interpret correctly and use. The DHS sponsored report, Comprehensive Testing of Imminent Threat Public Messages for Mobile Devices, came to the same conclusion.

**Allow alerts to contain embedded pictures, phone numbers and clickable links:** Through the use of Twitter, Instagram and other short form social media, the public now expects multimedia